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UNCLAS HARARE 000862

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/S  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER  
USDOC FOR AMANDA HILLIGAS  
TREASURY FOR OREN WYCHE-SHAW  
PASS USTR FLORIZELLE LISER  
STATE PASS USAID FOR MARJORIE COPSON, ERIC LOKEN

E. O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [EINV](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: More GOZ Infighting on Land Issue

1. (SBU) Summary: GOZ bickering over land reform has intensified over the past week, pitting hardliners against moderates. End summary.

The Daily Herald Barrage

2. (SBU) Publicly, this wrangle has taken the form of attacks from the GOZ's daily Herald on Lands, Land Reform and Resettlement Minister John Nkomo. He is gingerly attempting to move some settlers around and possibly account for multiple farm recipients. On May 17, an unsigned Herald article quoted an unnamed political analyst, saying Nkomo actions are "tantamount to a reversal of the land reform program . . . and will have far-reaching implications." The May 18 Herald suggested "not all is well with [land reform] since the splitting up" of the Agriculture and Lands Ministry into two separate bodies. Similar reports have followed, with Nkomo finally denouncing these unnamed sources and denying he was turning back land reform or returning farms to whites. Today an unsigned Herald letter-to-the-editor complained that Nkomo had "bedeviled" the "land reform program since he took over [from] Minister Joseph Made."

Comment

3. (SBU) Clearly, Information Minister Jonathan Moyo has thrown the weight of the official media behind Agriculture Minister Made, who is upset over losing the land reform portfolio. Hardliners Moyo and Made may want to purge remaining white farmers. As major land reform beneficiaries, they may also seek to scuttle any crackdown on multiple farm recipients. Even with encouragement from Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono, Nkomo - from the minority Ndebele ethnic group - has been too timid to assert himself. Hardliners recently prevailed over moderates in taking over Charleswood Estate and Kondozi farms, skirting numerous judicial decisions. Should Gono eventually assert himself more publicly on the land issue, it may be more difficult for Made and Moyo to steer the process and debate. For now, these hardliners seem to be coming out on top.

Sullivan